

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 1969**

**Introduced by Assembly Member Steinberg**  
(Coauthor: Senator Perata)

February 18, 2000

---

---

An act to add Section 4044 to the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to mental health.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1969, as introduced, Steinberg. Mental health: housing.

Existing law requires the State Department of Mental Health, to the extent resources are available, to provide program development guidelines, evaluation models, and operational assistance on all aspects of services to mentally ill persons, including housing development.

Existing law provides for the regulation of health facilities, including skilled nursing facilities, by the State Department of Health Services. Existing law requires that the regulations adopted by the department prescribe standards based on the type of health facility and the needs of the persons served. In this regard, the regulations set forth the requirements for a skilled nursing facility to provide special treatment programs to serve certain mentally ill patients.

This bill would require the department, in conjunction with various other entities, to develop protocols to review, monitor, and report on existing and potential skilled nursing facilities that have or could have special treatment programs. The bill would prescribe various requirements of the department

regarding developing a program for conducting local reviews concerning these facilities, developing a mechanism that allows public access, including Internet access, to information regarding the reviews and developing a mechanism that allows public access to information related to any citations issued to these facilities by the State Department of Health Services or the State Department of Social Services.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares as  
2 follows:

3 (a) There is a nexus between homelessness among the  
4 seriously mentally ill and adequate and affordable  
5 housing.

6 (b) Twenty-four-hour housing for the seriously  
7 mentally ill is a continuum that includes the following  
8 alternatives:

9 (1) State hospital.

10 (2) Institute for mental disease.

11 (3) Mental health rehabilitation centers.

12 (4) Board and care.

13 (5) Supported living.

14 (6) Independent living.

15 (c) The monitoring of living situations for the seriously  
16 mentally ill needs to include more than monitoring  
17 “bricks and mortar,” square footage requirements, or  
18 local zoning regulations.

19 SEC. 2. Section 4044 is added to the Welfare and  
20 Institutions Code, to read:

21 4044. (a) The State Department of Mental Health, in  
22 conjunction with county mental health programs, county  
23 mental health boards and commissions, the National  
24 Alliance for the Mentally Ill-California, and the California  
25 Client Network shall develop protocols to review,  
26 monitor, and report on existing and potential skilled  
27 nursing facilities that have or could have a special  
28 treatment program, as described in Sections 72443 to

1 72475, inclusive, of Title 22 of the California Code of  
2 Regulations, to serve patients who have a chronic  
3 psychiatric impairment and whose adaptive functioning  
4 is moderately impaired.

5 (b) The department shall establish a program for  
6 conducting local reviews of a skilled nursing facility  
7 described in subdivision (a) using the protocols  
8 developed pursuant to subdivision (a). The reviews  
9 conducted locally shall be conducted by a group that shall  
10 include, but not be limited to, representatives from all of  
11 the entities specified in subdivision (a).

12 (c) The department shall develop a mechanism that  
13 allows public access, including Internet access, to  
14 information regarding the results of the reviews  
15 conducted pursuant to subdivision (b) and related to any  
16 citations issued to a skilled nursing facility described in  
17 subdivision (a) by the State Department of Health  
18 Services or the State Department of Social Services.

19 (d) (1) The State Department of Health Services and  
20 the State Department of Social Services shall forward  
21 copies of citations issued to a skilled nursing facility  
22 described in subdivision (a) to the State Department of  
23 Mental Health and the county in which the facility or  
24 program is located.

25 (e) The reviews and licensing information collected  
26 pursuant to this section shall be used to develop an  
27 assessment of the statewide housing options available to  
28 persons with mental illness.

